



# ORGANISING AN EFFECTIVE DOOR KNOCKING SESSION AND RUNNING THE BOARD

## A GUIDE FOR SESSION ORGANISERS AND BOARD RUNNERS

We are a party built on the strength of our membership. Every week thousands of volunteers up and down the country give up their time to engage and speak with potential Labour voters. Door knocking is our principle way of listening to voters and personal contact remains the most persuasive thing we can do to maximise our support.

Because our volunteer time is so valuable we need to ensure that all of our sessions are well organised and those members organising the session and or 'running the board' are doing so in the most effective way, that's why we have put together this briefing sheet, in order to share with you best practice and new ideas.

### Before the session

- ▶ When you have decided where you are going to doorknock, let local stakeholders including cllrs, candidates and branch officers know where you will be campaigning before you advertise the session. Invite them to come along but tell them if they can't attend, to provide a briefing.
- ▶ Put all campaign sessions onto the events tool at [labour.org.uk/addevent](https://labour.org.uk/addevent)
- ▶ Send an email adverting the door knocking session with a clear time and meeting point which should be easy to find – encourage participants to sign up. Follow up with anyone who signs up to a session with a phone call. Regular campaigners and those who have signed up should be sent text reminders.
- ▶ Remind members that we have an introduction to door knocking session on our e-learning platform [achieve.labour.org.uk](https://achieve.labour.org.uk)
- ▶ Understand our transparency obligations and our data protection responsibilities around everything we do, and make sure volunteers are briefed on this
- ▶ It is good to offer training before each voter ID session so that everyone has the confidence to canvass and that they are following best practice, ensuring they have a meaningful conversations with electors
- ▶ Give full details of main meeting point and team leader on the day
- ▶ Consider and communicate public transport options
- ▶ Think about step-free routes and nearby public toilets for accessibility
- ▶ Keep a list of those who let you know that they are attending

- Identify board runners and identify drivers
- Based on your RSVP list, assemble your canvassing packs or Doorstep App data. Make sure you have more rounds than the number of people you are expecting so you do not run out of work
- Understand our safeguarding and accessibility guidance and undertake any risk assessments necessary
- Make sure your roadgroups are up to date. Contact Creator can automatically generate maps!
- You can amend the default briefing sheet in Contact Creator with key local messages and useful information – see the Administration section of Contact Creator
- Be aware of the Electoral Commission’s code of conduct on encouraging electoral registration and postal vote applications - ensure volunteers are appropriately briefed

### RESOURCES NEEDED ON THE DAY

Other resources to prepare for the day should include:

- Voter ID sheets: split into rounds with some spare – always better to have too much OR Doorstep App data and Pin & Session ID for Doorstep App users
- Put hole punched voter ID sheets into a ring binder – much easier than a clipboard
- Sign-in sheet
- Outcards/calling cards
- Clipboards
- Pens/pencils
- Labour stickers/rosettes
- Maps (one for the round with the roads to be canvassed highlighted)
- A local briefing that provides candidate names & any local issues that might come up
- Postal vote sign up forms
- Labour Party membership forms
- ‘Register to vote’ cards

- Window posters (in the run up to an election), ideally with blu-tac or adhesive tape
- Some blank A4 paper to make notes
- Casework/issue forms

### ON THE DAY

On the day of the session there are a few things to remember:

- If you are organising the session make sure you head to the meeting point early – you don’t want to keep people waiting around for you
- Make sure you’ve got your phone with you and that all volunteers have your contact details and can easily contact you
- Sign in all volunteers and make sure they write down their mobile numbers in case they get separated (but don’t put them into your phone)
- Provide a Campaign Activity Contact Form to any campaigners aged 14-18 years [labour.org.uk/safeguarding/resource-hub/](http://labour.org.uk/safeguarding/resource-hub/)
- Double check that they’ve got all the resources they need (especially if some volunteers have joined late)
- Gather your group and let them know the route you’re taking
- Make sure you’ve got your voter ID sheets sorted into the route you’ll be walking so that it’s easy to find the right page
- Try to keep everyone moving and stay ahead of the group – it’s important that your team are knocking on as many doors as possible (this not only ensures an effective session, but also ensures our volunteers feel that their time has been well spent)
- Keep a sight line with all volunteers, especially those under 18. Don’t move on without checking the whole team are back
- Write the initials of the canvasser next to the door that you send them to. This is in case they get stuck on a door or if you lose them, you will then know where they are to find them
- Voter ID sheets now produce a separate page of the voter ID script – consult this if you are unsure!

➤ Use the key national and local messaging in the briefing sheets on Contact Creator

➤ Use the candidate's time wisely – see below

## RUNNING THE BOARD WITH CANDIDATES

If you have your Parliamentary Candidate, MP or Council Candidate attending the session, they should focus on meeting as many electors as possible. Therefore, the team should be briefed to ask electors if they want to meet Labour's representative. The candidate or MP should wait until they are called over by a volunteer to a door. Ideally they should spend a little more time with sympathetic or potentially persuadable voters (opposition voters with no intention of considering Labour should be screened out by volunteers). The volunteer should remain at the door and should feed any casework/community & policy issues back to the board runner.

The board runner should also make a note of everyone the candidate or MP has spoken to or met on the doorsteps. By setting up a question on Contact Creator, a follow-up direct mail can then be sent by them to those people who met him or her, starting with the sentence "It was good to meet you the other day" and then thanking them for their support and telling them what you plan to do for them and the area they live in. Follow-up phone calls with identified potentially persuadable voters is another good use of a candidate's time after a campaign session.

PARTY CODES	
Labour	L
Conservative	T
Lib Dem	S
Against	A
Won't say	X
Don't know	D
Non voter	Z
Independent	I
Plaid Cymru	P
SNP	N
Brexit Party/UKIP	B
Socialist Labour	R
Green	G
Change UK	M
BNP	V
Other party	J

## FILLING OUT YOUR VOTER ID SHEETS

### Recording responses to questions 1, 2 & 4

To record responses to questions 1, 2 and 4 on the Voter ID script, we use 'party codes'. You can see these party codes on the bottom left.

Questions 1, 2 and 4 on the Voter ID script are:

**Question 1** If there was an election tomorrow, which political party would you support?

**Question 2** At the last General Election in 2017, which party did you vote for?

**Question 4** There are local elections for XXX on XX this year. Which party you will support in those elections?

### Recording responses to question 3

Responses to question 3 "Would you prefer a Labour to a Conservative Government?" are easy to record. We either record:

- Y: for yes – they would prefer a Labour government to a Conservative government
- N: for no – they would not prefer a Labour government to a Conservative government

There is also a response "U" for unsure.

Canvassers should ask question 3 of all electors who have not responded or who have said they don't know to question 1.

Make sure every conversation with an elector in which you gather Voter ID ends with the following words:

*"Thanks for your time, we may use your answers to help us campaign better. If you're interested, you can find out about how we might use your data from the privacy page on the party website."*

Recording responses to the Voter ID questions canvassers ask on the doorstep accurately using these codes is very important, as we use this data to inform our campaigning and messaging. It is also our legal duty to ensure that any data we collect about an individual is accurate.

We write the appropriate codes for the responses an elector gives in the boxes provided next to their names on Voter ID sheets.

The Doorstep App uses Party logos and data is entered directly into the database.

## DEBRIEFING AND THANKING YOUR CANVASSERS

Hopefully by now you've had a great door knocking session, and have spoken to lots of voters. Here are a few things to remember when finishing up the session:

- ▶ Makes sure you've collected and written down everyone's canvassing returns – especially from the last few doors
- ▶ Make sure you collect in any case work that volunteers have written on their clipboards – this information will need to be passed on to your local Labour councillor, candidate or MP
- ▶ Make sure everyone has signed in using the sign-in sheets
- ▶ Take a photo! Tweet it using #ForThe Many
- ▶ Make sure everyone in your group knows about any drinks or café visits taking place after the session and future campaigning sessions
- ▶ Ensure that all sheets containing data are stored securely after a session, inputted as quickly as possible and all sheets are subsequently shredded.
- ▶ Make sure any activists under 18 are accounted for and that all records containing young members' details are destroyed after the activity
- ▶ Thank everyone for coming

## GDPR

We're currently working on changes to our Voter ID script to reflect changes in learning from several years of using our existing script, changes to the way we campaign and organise as a party, changes to the political and electoral context in which we operate, and (not least) the changing legal requirements since the introduction of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and the UK's new Data Protection Act. There will be further changes to come in future years, and we'll be making changes to Contact Creator and the printed outputs it produces to help people get all these things right every time.

As mentioned earlier, with GDPR now in force, and in the short term you should make sure that every

conversation with an elector in which you gather Voter ID ends with the following words: *"Thanks for your time: we may use your answers to help us campaign better. If you're interested, you can find out about how we might use your data from the privacy page on the party website."*

Materials to help support you to deliver training on this locally to campaigners, to provide more information to electors who ask for more information, are being developed at the moment and will be available soon. We're also working on how you can ensure that your printed materials play their part in helping us fulfil our obligation to be transparent in what we do and inform people of how we use information about them.

## FURTHER RESOURCES

- ▶ Lots more training available on successful campaigning in the form of guides, webinars and e-Learning courses at [labour.org.uk/training](http://labour.org.uk/training) and [achieve.labour.org.uk](http://achieve.labour.org.uk)
- ▶ Safeguarding guidance – 'Safe campaign activities' resources at [labour.org.uk/safeguarding/resource-hub/](http://labour.org.uk/safeguarding/resource-hub/)
- ▶ Legal and Data Protection guidance [labour.org.uk/activist-hub/governance-and-legal-hub/](http://labour.org.uk/activist-hub/governance-and-legal-hub/)

## HOW TO KEEP OUR VOLUNTEERS SAFE AND WARM

- ▶ Think about providing head torches for board runners
- ▶ Encourage members to wrap up warm and wear high visibility clothing
- ▶ If it's cold outside why not have shorter, more regular sessions
- ▶ If possible can you arrange more meeting points that are indoors
- ▶ Can you use weather appropriate stationery – pencils rather than pens and folders rather than clipboards
- ▶ If any member is nervous about door knocking ensure that they can pair up with someone for all or part of the session